

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00

L-03 FRB-03 OMB-01 ITC-01 SP-02 USIA-06 AGRE-00

AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07 IO-13 LAB-04

NSAE-00 OIC-02 EPG-02 SIL-01 STR-04 TRSE-00

CEA-01 SS-15 /128 W

-----087245 270109Z /66

R 261542Z JUL 77

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9682

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, UNCTAD, EGEN

SUBJECT: UNCTAD COMMODITIES: GUIDANCE ON SPECIAL CONSIDERATION
FOR LEAST DEVELOPED, LANDLOCKED AND ISLAND COUNTRIES

REF: GENEVA 6070, GENEVA 6071

1. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS USDELS TO COMMODITY MEETINGS HAVE
BEEN CONFRONTED WITH A DRAFT DECISION DEALING WITH SPECIAL
TREATMENT FOR SUBJECT CATEGORIES OF COUNTRIES. IN THE FOURTH

PREPARATORY MEETING ON JUTE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE DECISION INCLUDED
THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE: "WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE RELEVANT
PROVISIONS OF RESOLUTION 98(IV) AND THE INTERESTS OF THE
OTHER PRODUCING COUNTRIES, SPECIAL COONSIDERATION SHOULD BE
GIVEN TO THE NEEDS OF THE DEVELOPING LANDLOCKED LEAST-
DEVELOPED JUTE-PRODUCING COUNTRY BY ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE
FIELDS OF RESEARCH, PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKET PROMOTION."

2. PARA 14 OF RESOLUTION 98(IV) STATES THAT "SPECIAL

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CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN, IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMODITY
AGREEMENTS, TO THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES... WITH A
VIEW TO IMPROVING THE MARKETING OF THEIR PRODUCTION OF SUCH
COMMODITIES..." THE WORDING IN SECTION III, PARA 56 DEALING
WITH COMMODITY EXPORT EARNINGS OF ISLAND COUNTRIES AND
PARA 73 OF SECTION IV FOR LAND LOCKED COUNTRIES LEAVES THE
ISSUE OF FURTHER SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR THESE CATEGORIES OF

LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO THE SECGEN OF UNCTAD FOR STUDY AND ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS.

3. DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF GROUP B HAVE INDICATED THEIR GENERAL POSITION IS TO AGREE TO SEPARATE STATEMENTS FOR THESE COUNTRIES ONLY WHERE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT AND LANGUAGE IS CLEAR AS TO THE SUBJECT OF THE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION. IN THE JUTE EXAMPLE CITED ABOVE, MOST DELEGATIONS CONSIDERED THAT NEPAL'S RELIANCE ON JUTE AS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF EXPORT EARNINGS AND ITS DEPENDENCE ON INDIA FOR TRANSSHIPMENT MERITED SPECIAL COONSIDERATION, WHICH COULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED EVEN PRIOR TO A POSSIBLE NEGOTIATION. NEVERTHELESS, BANGLADESH INSISTED THAT 98(IV) PROVIDED SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR ALL LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND NOT SOLELY FOR THOSE IN PARTICULAR GEOGRAPHIC CIRCUMSTANCES. THE RESULTING COMPROMISE LANGUAGE PROVIDING SPECIAL COONSIDERATION WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO 98(IV) AND CONFINING IT TO RESEARCH, PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKET PROMOTION WAS ACCEPTED BY NEPAL BECAUSE IT WAS MAINLY INTERESTED IN CALLING PUBLIC ATTENTION TO ITS PLIGHT VIS-A-VIS THE OTHER PRODUCERS AND NOT OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SPECIFIC LANGUAGE OF THE DECISION. USDEL RESERVED ON THIS ITEM BUT ADVISED THAT THE RESERVE MIGHT BE REMOVED AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT. IN RESERVING USDEL EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS DUE TO CONCERN OVER PRECEDENT AND SHOULD IN NO WAY BE INTERPRETED AS A LACK OF SYMPATHY FOR NEPAL'S SPECIAL PROBLEMS.

4. MISSION IS CONCERNED THAT JUTE EXAMPLE WILL BE USED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BY OTHER LAND LOCKED COUNTRIES FOR SIMILAR LANGUAGE IN OTHER COMMODITIES. SPECIAL TREATMENT QUESTION WILL NO DOUBT HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH IN SOME COMMODITY NEGOTIATIONS BUT WE ARE CONCERNED OVER ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN PRIOR AGREEMENT FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IN PREPARATORY MEETINGS. WHILE US COULD AGREE TO LANGUAGE WHICH CONFINED SPECIAL CONSIDERATION TO SPECIFIC AREAS IN WHICH IT AGREES SUCH CONSIDERATION IS WARRANTED, THIS COULD BOG MEETINGS DOWN IN EXTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS OVER LANGUAGE AND DEFINITIONS. US CAN DO LITTLE TO KEEP DEVELOPING PRODUCERS FROM RAISING ISSUE BUT IT WOULD NOT HAVE TO BE A PARTY TO TH DEBATE.

5. MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE FROM DEPARTMENT BOTH WITH RESPECT TO THE OUTSTANDING RESERVE ON THE JUTE DECISION AND THE POSITION TO BE TAKEN SHOULD THE ISSUE ARISE IN FUTURE COMMODITY MEETINGS. SHOULD THE DEPARTMENT DECIDE US SHOULD DISCOURAGE SUCH LANGUAGE IN FUTURE MEETINGS AND THAT US WILL CONTINUE TO RESERVE, DEPARTMENT MIGHT ALSO WISH TO CONSIDER SO ADVISING OTHER MAJOR DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

VANDEN HEUVEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMODITIES, LANDLOCKED COUNTRIES, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GENEVA06290
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770267-0027
Format: TEL
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770720/aaaaaqmh.tel
Line Count: 113
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1cfc0d64-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 GENEVA 6070, 77 GENEVA 6071
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1752151
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNCTAD COMMODITIES: GUIDANCE ON SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR LEAST DEVELOPED, LANDLOCKED AND ISLAND COUNTRIES
TAGS: ECON, EGEN, UNCTAD
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1cfc0d64-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009